

**SUMMARY OF THE
PROFICIENCY TESTING COMMITTEE MEETING
JANUARY 5, 1999**

The Proficiency Testing Committee of the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) met on Tuesday, January 5, 1999 at 1 p.m. by teleconference. The meeting was led by its chair, Ms. Anne Rhyne of the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission. A list of action items is given in Attachment A. A list of participants is given in Attachment B. *The principal purpose of the meeting was to discuss the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) proposed rule for drinking water samples in the Federal Register, and finalize preparation for the Interim Meeting.*

SECTION C.5.0 - C.5.4

Mr. Chuck Wibby read some proposed language for Section C.5.0 to delete the reference to "pass/fail" and also add some additional language for Section C.5.4. Mr. Wibby will send the proposed language to Ms. Rhyne and it will be open for discussion at the Interim Meeting.

Mr. Wibby also explained the 80% rule. If a laboratory passes 80% of 25 analytes, then the laboratory passes the proficiency testing (PT) for all analytes in the sample. If the laboratory does not pass 80%, then it is not accredited for any of the analytes in the PT. If a laboratory fails to correctly analyze the same analyte, twice in a row, then the laboratories is not accredited for that particular analyte. Laboratories will be scored for both false negatives and false positives.

EPA/NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF STANDARDS AND TECHNOLOGY (NIST) ITEMS

PT Database

Mr. Graves explained that the main purpose of the national database is to be a secondary archive for data. It will be used to set future regression equations. In addition, it will allow EPA to study the quality of individual PT providers over time, and the quality across providers.

Federal Register

Mr. Dick Reding said that the July 31, 1998 rule codifies the existing practice of running a performance evaluation (PE) sample with whatever method a laboratory uses to report results. As it stands right now, providers can choose to not include all analytes in a PT sample. He said that significant comments were received regarding the rule published in the September 3, 1998 Federal Register (which requires annual PTs for each method used by a laboratory for drinking water). A withdrawal notice was given December 31, 1998. EPA is on-track for a second final ruling, which may be released in the spring of 1999. Ms. Rhyne commented that this rule conflicts with the NELAC standards. If EPA promulgates the rule, then NELAC may need to revise its standards for the drinking water program.

Mr. Graves discussed EPA's proposed regulations in the September 3, 1998 Federal Register regarding 1) zero or non-detect values and 2) the number of analytes in PTs. He said that zeros

are equivalent to having a real concentration present. Correctly identifying a compound as not present is the same as identifying a compound which is present. Regarding the number of analytes present, a PT sample for 1 to 10 parameters must contain all of the analytes; for 10 to 20 parameters, the sample must contain a minimum of 10 analytes or 80%, whichever is greater; and for greater than 20 parameters, the sample must contain a minimum of 16 analytes or 60%, whichever is greater. He noted that random selection would determine which parameters to include.

NIST Update

Ms. Reenie Parris provided an update on NIST activities. She said that all of the parameters on NELAC's priority analyte list are now covered. Applications have been received from 11 PT providers. NIST will send a letter out which says to contact Ms. Wendy Blake-Coleman for a list of accredited providers. NIST will be expanding their program to include radiochemistry proficiency testing, and supplementary applications will be available.

**ACTION ITEMS
PROFICIENCY TESTING COMMITTEE MEETING
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Item No.	Action Item	Date To Be Completed
1.	Mr. Wibby will send proposed language for C.5.0-C.5.4 to Ms. Rhyne for distribution to the PT Committee.	Interim Meeting

**PARTICIPANTS
PROFICIENCY TESTING COMMITTEE MEETING
JANUARY 5, 1999**

Name	Affiliation	Address
Ms. Anne Rhyne, Chair	TX Natural Resrc. Conserv. Comm.	T: 512-239-1291 F: 512-239-2550 E: arhyne@tnrcc.state.tx.us
Ms. Lara Autry	U.S. EPA, Emission Measurement Center	T: 919-541-5544 F: 919-541-1039 E: autry.lara@epamail.epa.gov
Ms. Wendy Blake-Coleman (invited guest)	U.S. EPA, Office of Water	T: 202-260-5680 F: 202-260-7923 E: blake-coleman.wendy@epamail.epa.gov
Ms. Barbara Burmeister	Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene	T: 608-833-1770, ext. 107 F: 608-833-1019 E: burmie@mail.slh.wisc.edu
Mr. Matt Caruso	NY State Dept. of Health	T: 518-485-5570 F: 518-485-5568 E: caruso@wadsworth.org
Mr. Tom Coyner (absent)	Analytical Products Group	T: 614-423-4200 F: 614-423-5588 E: apg@citynet.net
Ms. Betsy Dutrow (liaison)	U.S. EPA, Office of Research and Development	T: 202-564 - 9061 F: 202-565 - 2441 E: dutrow.elizabeth@epamail.epa.gov
Mr. Edward Glick (invited guest)	U.S. EPA, Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water	T: 513-569-7939 F: 513-569-7191 E: glick.edward@epamail.epa.gov
Mr. Robert Graves (invited guest)	U.S. EPA, Office of Research and Development	T: 513-569-7197 F: 513-569-7115 E: graves.bob@epamail.epa.gov
Mr. Jim Horne (invited guest)	PBS&J Environmental Toxicology Laboratory	T: 713-977-1500 F: 713-977-9233 E: jhorne@hal-pc.org
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PARTICIPANTS (CONTINUED)
PROFICIENCY TESTING COMMITTEE MEETING
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Ms. Darlene Raiford	Hampton Roads Sanitation District	T: 757-460-4217 F: 757-460-6586 E: draiford@hrsd.dst.va.us
Mr. Richard Reding (invited guest)	U.S. EPA, Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water	T: 513-569-7946 F: 513-569-7191 E: reding.richard@epamail.epa.gov
Mr. Chuck Wibby	Environmental Resource Associates	T: 303-431-8454 F: 303-421-0159 E: qcstds@aol.com
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